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Trends in Communist Propaganda

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TRENDS

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8 JANUARY 1975

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U. S. - S O V I E T R E L A T I O N S

MOSCOW CAUTIOUS ON U.S. "THREATS" OF MIDEAST MILITARY ACTION

Moscow has reacted cautiously to the recent public discussion in the United States about the possibility of using force to break the Arabs' control of the world's major oil supplies. Moscow has identified and summarily described the two main items in the discussion--Secretary Kissinger's interview with BUSINESS WEEK, in the issue dated 13 January, and Robert W. Tucker's article in COMMENTARY, excerpted in the Washington POST on 5 January; however, it has treated the discussion more as symptomatic of U.S. policy dilemmas than as a serious indication of U.S. intentions. It has been particularly circumspect in its treatment of Secretary Kissinger's remarks, suggesting an effort to distinguish his role in the affair from that of more immoderate figures.

Moscow reacted promptly to the publication of Kissinger's interview. The TASS Russian service on the 3d quoted accurately Kissinger's remarks that military action was "a very dangerous course" in regard to an oil price dispute, but "another" thing if "actual strangulation of the industrialized world" were involved. However the 4 January PRAVDA version of Kissinger's interview omitted his remarks on military action. Subsequent reports and comment, particularly items addressed to the Soviet audience have similarly blurred Kissinger's remarks, describing them by indirection. Thus, Kissinger was said to have "confirmed" the fears in Western Europe over the calls for U.S. military action, and the world press was said to have regarded his remarks as an "admission" that the United States was ready to use military force in the Middle East.

On the other hand, foreign-language broadcasts have shown less reluctance to acknowledge the Secretary's remarks. For example, Moscow's "unofficial" Radio Peace and Progress program in Arabic on 3 January directly attributed to Kissinger the statement that force would be used in a case of maximum emergency; it prefaced the citation by noting Kissinger's reputation for prudence and by stressing that he himself had introduced the remark with the statement that he wished to be clearly understood on the issue.

In addition to its cautious treatment of Kissinger, Moscow has shown other signs of an intention to treat the issue with moderation. In minimal interpretative comment thus far Moscow has viewed the discussion variously as a trial balloon or as a form of political

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pressure aimed at obstructing plans favored by the Common Market for organizing closer collaboration with the oil-producing countries. It has avoided more alarmist interpretations, and indeed has tended to discount the possibility that the United States would actually undertake military operations against Middle Eastern states.

CIA DEVELOPMENTS ATTRACT SOVIET AND EAST EUROPEAN COMMENT

The current public allegations in the United States concerning CIA domestic surveillance activities directed against American citizens are continuing to attract reportage and comment in Soviet and East European media. Although most items have been pegged to news developments in the case, they have generally been presented in such a way as to highlight features of the affair that substantiate communist stereotypes of the CIA and of American society. In addition, the Soviet and East European media have indulged heavily in satire, pointing up the alleged inconsistency between activities supposedly carried out by the CIA and the professed commitment of the United States to personal freedom and democracy.

SOVIET COMMENT The major Soviet comment to date was contained in an international review article by Tomas Kolesnichenko in the 5 January PRAVDA. Noting that accusations against the Soviet Union about an "absence of democracy" and "persecution of dissenters" had frequently been made in the United States, he suggested that the recent revelations showed that such characterization might better have been applied to the United States. It turns out, he said, that the vaunted "bourgeois democracy" is a system of "total shadowing and espionage."

Other items have suggested that the accusations against the CIA represent merely the tip of an iceberg, and that other agencies would be involved. A commentary to North America on the 3d expressed doubt that the CIA could operate illegally without the knowledge of higher officials. Another item on the 2d asserted that the CIA was only one of the agencies involved in domestic espionage, noting that the FBI, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the IRS, and other agencies contributed to the "banks" of information kept on U.S. citizens. A characteristic feature of all the Moscow comment has been the treatment of the allegations as proven facts.

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EAST EUROPEAN COMMENT Sharp censure of alleged CIA domestic surveillance activities has been registered by Moscow's orthodox East European allies, who have sarcastically noted a discrepancy between such practices and professed American traditions of democracy and freedom. At the same time, the East Europeans have not so far echoed the charge by Kolesnichenko in the 5 January PRAVDA to the effect that, in view of the latest "scandal," U.S. accusations of Soviet repression of dissidents are patently unjust.

Dominant themes pervading much of the comment were that the revelations of alleged illegal CIA activities were to be expected in the wake of the Watergate affair and that the CIA's domestic activities were part of a continuing repression of "progressive" Americans by the establishment. Thus, the East Berlin domestic service on 30 December commented that the United States, "which still claims to be the bastion of democracy, freedom and humaneness, is faced with a fresh scandal even before the files on one of America's dirtiest pieces of history--Watergate--could be closed." Similarly, a Washington-dated dispatch in the Bulgarian party daily RABOTNICHESKO DELO on the 28th viewed the domestic surveillance, whether performed by the CIA or the FBI, as a "trampling of the democratic privileges that have been declared in the bourgeois constitution." The same day Prague's RUDE PRAVO pointed out that "the fact that the CIA is carrying out illegal activities" domestically "was mentioned in Washington from the very beginning of the Watergate affair." In a more detached vein, Warsaw's SLOWO POWSZECHNE noted that "under American conditions" the affair had caused a commotion and that Americans, while aware of CIA activities abroad, "never thought it interfered with U.S. citizens in the United States itself."

The appointment of a Presidential investigative commission on the 5th was reported without comment by Moscow and most of the East European countries. But East Berlin and Sofia discounted in advance the possibility of meaningful corrective action: The East Berlin radio on the 30th predicted that the investigation would reveal only those facts permitted by the rival factions of the American bourgeoisie and that "the system, which again and again produces acts of inhumanity, will not be touched." And RABOTNICHESKO DELO on the 28th viewed the appeals by U.S. public figures for restoring legality in the CIA's activities as "nothing but a mere formality."

Of the maverick communist states, Romanian and Yugoslav media have carried factual reports of developments in the wake of the 22 December New York TIMES article, with Belgrade joining Moscow's

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orthodox allies in pointing out the statutory division of responsibilities between the CIA and FBI. Tirana waited until the 6th to issue its denunciation, carried by ATA, of the activities described in the TIMES article. The commentary, devoted largely to a rehash of attacks on the CIA's activities abroad, referred to a remark by President Ford on Chile and CIA Director Colby's interview in U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT.

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MIDDLE EAST

USSR DEFENSIVE ON BREZHNEV TRIP DELAY, RELATIONS WITH EGYPT

Predictably avoiding explanations for the 30 December postponement of Brezhnev's mid-January Mideast visit, Moscow has responded defensively to speculation that the postponement was due to Soviet-Egyptian differences on the proper approach to Arab-Israeli negotiations.* Soviet media have sought to depict Soviet-Egyptian relations as proceeding normally and the two countries' views as harmonious on the need for a speedy resumption of the Geneva conference. But Moscow's selective or distorted reportage on recent as-Sadat remarks concerning the Geneva conference, along with continued carping about "quiet diplomacy" and "partial steps" toward a settlement, point to continuing Soviet-Egyptian differences over negotiating strategy.

TRIP POSTPONEMENT Typifying Moscow's treatment of "all sorts of speculation" about the reasons for postponement of the Brezhnev tour, PRAVDA's Mayevskiy, in Moscow radio's 5 January roundtable program, charged that such "conjectures" were aimed at hindering Soviet-Arab relations and, like similar such attempts in the past, would not succeed. Mayevskiy, like other comment, took the tack that it was "important to emphasize," in view of foreign media speculation to the contrary, that the talks during Foreign Minister Fahmi's recent visit had achieved "positive results."

TASS reports have drawn on Cairo press comment to demonstrate that, in the words of AL-AKHBAR, Egypt was "satisfied with the way the postponement was handled" and that the decision would "not affect the good relations between our countries." In a dispatch on the 2d, TASS cited AL-AHRAM as declaring that during the Fahmi visit the sides discussed "with utmost frankness and clarity" questions of their bilateral relations and the resumption of the Geneva peace conference, and that "this method of holding talks can only be pursued between friends who trust each other."

* Moscow of course has not acknowledged rumors that the postponement was due to the state of Brezhnev's health, and has ignored Cairo press reports that Brezhnev was suffering from a "medical condition" and had been advised to curtail his activities.

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DIFFERENCES ON
MIDEAST STRATEGY

President as-Sadat's 2 January remarks at a scientists' conference and Moscow's treatment of his statements indicate persisting differences over negotiating strategy. In response to a question as-Sadat said he feared that the Mideast situation could become "frozen" if there were too hasty a resumption of the Geneva conference. He explained that without adequate prior U.S.-Soviet and Arab agreements, a renewed Geneva conference would lead to "polarization" and a return to a "state of stagnation." He added that attempts to avoid such an adverse development--with its attendant likelihood of a new war--"may be the reason behind the delay in convening the Geneva conference." Noting in the same general context that "the progress made toward peace last summer by the United States" had been slowed down by the U.S. domestic political situation and consequent change of Presidents, as-Sadat told the conference: "Let us give them [the United States] an opportunity," warning at the same time that "the coming three months will be decisive."

In brief coverage of as-Sadat's speech, Moscow either ignored or distorted his views on resumption of the Geneva conference and his favorable references to U.S. diplomatic efforts. A Cairo-dated TASS report on 3 January, carried in PRAVDA on the 4th, repeated as-Sadat's remark that "the coming period would be decisive," but followed it with an out-of-order reference to a "negative position" taken by the United States prior to the October 1973 war which allegedly blocked Arab efforts at that time to achieve a peaceful settlement. A brief Moscow radio broadcast in Arabic on the 3rd distorted as-Sadat's position on a renewed Geneva conference, saying only that as-Sadat had "supported the idea of resuming the conference."

A Kolesnichenko article in PRAVDA on the 5th, as reported by TASS, while not mentioning as-Sadat, clearly conflicted with his remarks on the possibility of "stagnation" at Geneva. Kolesnichenko asserted, on the contrary, that attempts to settle the Mideast conflict through "so-called quiet diplomacy suggesting the Mideast problem be solved stage-by-stage are of no avail, and in fact are conducive to a situation in which a partial settlement pushes a solution to the background for an indefinite period of time." Similarly, an IZVESTIYA article by V. Matveyev, reported by TASS on the 7th, criticized Israel's attempts, "with support from the outside," to prevent a resumption of the Geneva conference and instead to conduct "negotiations in a private atmosphere" seeking to attain "so-called partial, gradual steps that would in practice mean an indefinite prolongation" of the occupation of Arab lands.

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Matveyev asserted that the attitude toward resumption of the Geneva conference was an "important indicator of the sincerity of any declaration and statement in favor of a peaceful Mideast settlement."

EGYPTIAN INTERNAL In line with its cautious treatment of previous
DISTURBANCES domestic unrest in Egypt,* Moscow has again
 been circumspect in its handling of the worker-
student disturbances in and around Cairo on 1 January in protest
against deteriorating economic conditions. TASS promptly reported
the disturbances on 2 January, noting an official Egyptian statement
blaming "irresponsible elements" and a "handful of plotters" for
influencing the workers' demonstration toward violence. On the 5th,
as Egyptian media were reporting arrests and accusations of local
Egyptian communist involvement, TASS reported without comment that
as-Sadat and Premier al-Hijazi had met to discuss strengthening
internal security and insuring political and economic stability
"in light of recent events in the Egyptian capital."

A commentary by the "unofficial" Radio Peace and Progress on
3 January, however, did denounce the disturbances and go on to
hint of an undesirable linkage between the recent disorders in
Cairo and the course of future Mideast peace negotiations. It
called the disorders "dangerous at this stage in particular and
harmful to the Arab struggle for peace," adding that they "play
into the hands of Israel and its protectors" who are attempting
to keep the "fruits of aggression." The commentary warned that
such civil disorders would be exploited to create the impression
of domestic political instability and national disunity, thus
providing Israel with a pretext for allegedly continuing to
disregard "well-known UN resolutions," occupying Arab lands and
ignoring Palestinian rights.

The Peace and Progress commentary in effect portrayed the "conspirators"
who sparked the Cairo riots as local reactionaries intent on
denigrating Nasirist policies, remarking that "progressive" Egyptian
papers have had to "repel attempts to raise doubts" about the late
president's policies. By referring to hydroelectric power, newly
irrigated land, and new factories--benefits stemming from the Soviet-
assisted Aswan Dam and Helwan industrial complex--the commentary
implicitly presented Soviet cooperation as one of the elements of
the correct course followed by Nasir.

* See the TRENDS of 14 February 1973, pages 21-24.

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VIETNAM

FIGHTING IN SOUTH DRAWS LITTLE ATTENTION FROM COMMUNIST MEDIA

Vietnamese communist media have been cautious in their treatment of heavy fighting in South Vietnam culminating in the 7 January fall of Phuoc Binh provincial capital, the last GVN outpost in Phuoc Long Province. There has been almost no comment on the military action thus far, and official statements rejecting U.S. and Saigon protests have avoided acknowledging the extent of communist attacks. The capture of Phuoc Binh was reported belatedly in an 8 January VNA news item which claimed that government defenders had lost their position on the 6th and that the communist attacks were in retaliation for GVN military operations from the Phuoc Binh military base.

Hanoi's most detailed justification to date of the Phuoc Long attacks came in a 6 January NHAN DAN article, under the pseudonym byline "Tien Cong" (Attack), which cryptically acknowledged that the GVN was "sustaining quite painful blows." The commentary did not detail the nature of the communist attacks, but said that the GVN was being "punished" for its "sabotage" of the peace agreement and was receiving "the heaviest counterblows" in places where "they had committed the most heinous crimes." The paper went on to recount alleged GVN aggressive actions, many in Phuoc Long, and concluded with the claim that communist "ripostes in the Mekong River delta, Tay Ninh, Binh Tuy, Phuoc Long, and elsewhere are a legitimate right aimed at defending the Paris agreement. Reason, justice, and legality are completely on the side of the South Vietnamese armed forces and people."

RESPONSE TO U.S.
AND GVN PROTESTS

U.S. denunciation of the communist attacks in Phuoc Long, in a 3 January statement by the State Department press spokesman, and the GVN's protest in a proclamation on the same day, drew prompt responses on the 4th in the form of statements by a DRV Foreign Ministry spokesman and a PRG spokesman in Paris and on the 6th by a PRG Foreign Ministry spokesman. However, as reported by Vietnamese communist media, only the PRG Foreign Ministry spokesman specifically mentioned the situation in Phuoc Long and then only in condemning GVN "extermination bombing raids" in PRG-controlled areas of the province. Both the PRG and DRV foreign ministry spokesmen rejected charges that North Vietnam was responsible for the serious situation in the South, and the DRV spokesman defended the right of communist troops to "punish" the GVN forces.

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The standard demand that Thieu be overthrown and a new government established to negotiate with the PRG was repeated by the PRG spokesman in Paris; however, the PRG Foreign Ministry spokesman made no mention of the need for Thieu's removal and cited only the continuing U.S. support for Thieu as an impediment to the resumption of serious negotiations between the two South Vietnamese parties.

DRV, PRG VIEW OF SITUATION IN SOUTH BRIGHTER THAN LAST YEAR

Year-end comment from Hanoi and PRG media provided a capsule view of changed communist perceptions since a year ago, with more optimistic assessment of achievements reflecting communist military gains during 1974. In addition, comment this year gave more attention to activities of opponents to the Saigon government in South Vietnamese cities, predictably injecting the demand--first voiced last August--for GVN President Thieu's removal and the formation of a new government to implement the peace agreement. At the same time, the propaganda acknowledged continuing difficulties and the need for "protracted struggle."

DRV President Ton Duc Thang's New Year's message exemplified Hanoi's more upbeat evaluation of the communist position in the South and included a commendation of the southern urban struggle, which had not even been mentioned in his message a year ago. This year Thang praised southern forces for "bringing the enemy's pacification and land-grabbing plan against liberated areas to an initial failure and inflicting heavy losses on them." By contrast, last year he had only claimed that they were "defending and building" the PRG zone and "punishing" sabotage of the peace agreement. The more reserved claim a year ago seemed to reflect the communists' loss of ground to the GVN in 1973. It was not until March 1974 that the communists--apparently confident that territorial losses were being reversed--dropped their official demand for the return of the two sides to the January 1973 cease-fire line and claimed that "most areas" had been retaken and that in some places "the strength and position of the revolution are better" than in January 1973.*

The annual message to the North Vietnamese leaders from NFLSV chief Nguyen Huu Tho and PRG President Huynh Tan Phat similarly expressed greater gratification with southern achievements in 1974. The

* Communist claims of recapturing territory are discussed in the TRENDS of 22 May 1974, page 20, and 5 September 1974, page 10.

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message claimed that southern forces during the past year had "conducted a seething and violent struggle against the U.S.-Thieu clique" throughout the South, "defeated to a great extent the enemy pacification and land-grabbing plan, and won great, solid, and all-round victories, thus shifting the balance of power in our favor."

One of the most restrained New Year assessments of the situation in the South was contained in the 1 January editorial in the North Vietnamese army paper QUAN DOI NHAN DAN. While claiming that "victories" in 1974 had created conditions for "vigorous steps forward" in the coming year, the editorial was unusually direct in indicating that final success was in the distant future. The paper acknowledged that "the enemy has many troops, still controls many areas, and remains stubborn," and it added:

Our people's revolutionary struggle remains a protracted, complex, and fierce struggle, but we are certain to win greater victories with every passing year and will certainly achieve final victory.

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PRC FOREIGN AFFAIRS

YEAR-END REVIEWS PORTRAY RISING SUPERPOWER "CONTENTION"

Peking's view that superpower competition will preclude significant U.S.-Soviet cooperation detrimental to Chinese international interests was reflected in comprehensive NCNA year-end reviews of U.S.-Soviet relations. NCNA articles on 30 December and 3 January disparaged the results of the Nixon-Brezhnev and Ford-Brezhnev summits. The articles observed that in the wake of the May 1973 Washington meeting U.S.-Soviet war almost broke out over the Middle East, and that after the July 1974 Moscow summit the two sides "confronted each other in anger with swords unsheathed and bows drawn" over the Cyprus problem. Focusing on the Ford-Brezhnev meeting in Vladivostok in November, NCNA on the 3d set forth detailed "evidence" of the two sides' determination to continue the arms race despite new SALT agreements, claiming that the bilateral arms accords since the initial agreement in 1972 had merely shifted the superpower nuclear competition "from the quest for quantitative increase to one for qualitative improvement."

In contrast to Peking's cautious treatment of President Ford and Secretary Kissinger in the month following the Vladivostok meeting,* the new NCNA articles portrayed the U.S. leaders as fundamentally in contention with the Soviets. The 3 January article, for example, contained Peking's first reference to President Ford's 2 December press conference at which he discussed the Vladivostok meeting, highlighting his remarks that the United States could redress any imbalance in throw weight between U.S. and Soviet missiles and that U.S. arms capability could be expanded by the greater use of MIRV's. NCNA on the 30th pointed to Kissinger's seven trips to the Middle East over the past year as proof of an "intensified diplomatic race" by the United States designed to supplant Soviet influence in the area.

DANGER OF WORLD WAR,
ANTI-IMPERIALIST REVOLUTION

Reiterating a favorite theme of the past year, NCNA on the 30th warned of the rising "danger of world war"

caused by the intensified U.S.-Soviet competition for world dominance, pointing out that the two powers are "uttering more and more war clamors" while expanding their armaments. At the same time, however, the article laid relatively more stress on concurrent Chinese themes of

* For a discussion see TRENDS of 31 December 1974, pages 12-13.

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recent months about the rising power of the Third World against the superpowers and about the growing economic, political and social difficulties faced by Moscow and Washington. The balanced combination suggests that while Peking apparently has decided to increase its warnings of world war to counter Soviet propaganda on the progress of detente, the Chinese still hold to their traditional view that the continuing, low-key popular "revolution" against imperialism--rather than superpower nuclear conflagration--remains the "main trend" in the present world order.

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CHINA

CIVILIANS FILL PLA-VACATED PARTY POSTS IN FUKIEN, KIANGSI

The recent appointment of two rehabilitated civilian cadres to head the provincial party apparatus in Fukien and Kiangsi provinces marks a further erosion of the political power once held by military men in the PRC. A 1 January Foochow report on an army-civilian New Year soiree identified Liao Chih-kao, party chief in Szechwan prior to the cultural revolution, as first secretary of the Fukien provincial party committee. Kiangsi's new party leader was revealed in a 2 January Nanchang report on local efforts to study the central New Year's editorial. The radio identified Chiang Wei-ching, Kiangsu's party chief before the cultural revolution, as first secretary of the provincial party committee. Chiang replaces a military man who slipped from public view in the aftermath of the Lin Piao affair.

Liao's appointment in Fukien brings to three the number of new civilian party chiefs formally named to fill vacancies created a year ago in the transfer of all military commanders who were also provincial party leaders; new civilian first secretaries had been named earlier for Kwangtung and Shantung. The same pattern appears to have been followed in Kiangsu, where civilian Peng Chung was identified last month as chairman of the provincial revolutionary committee, an office held concurrently by all other provincial party chiefs. Three provinces--Anhui, Hupeh and Liaoning--have not yet identified new first secretaries to fill the vacancies created by last year's transfer of military region commanders.

Considering the recent trend toward reducing the political power of the military, it is unlikely that military men will be named to fill any of the remaining party vacancies. PLA leaders now wear the top party hat in only 10 provinces, a significant decline compared with the situation in August 1971, when the long campaign to rebuild the shattered party apparatus in all major administrative divisions came to an end and active PLA officers headed 20 of the 29 new party committees.

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MALAYAN CP

ANNUAL REVIEWS REFLECT PROBLEMS OVER PARTY SPLIT, PEKING TIES

Authoritative New Year assessments by the Peking-aligned Malayan Communist Party (MCP) serve to underscore the party's difficulties during the past year stemming from the surfacing in October of a major split in Malayan communist ranks and from the establishment of PRC-Malaysian diplomatic relations in May 1974. They also reflect the MCP's heightened interest in exploiting opportunities presented by the growing urban unrest and mass movement in Malaysia.

PARTY SPLIT The PRC-based clandestine radio "Voice of the Malayan Revolution" (VOMR) carried its customary editorial and battle review to mark the New Year, but in addition provided an authoritative New Year's message from the MCP Central Committee stressing the need for unity to overcome the "splitting activities of enemy agents" within the party during the past year. This year's editorial also focused on rebuking deviants from the party's "correct line," claiming that "the people of our country are keenly aware that the revolution in our country will not succeed without the leadership of the MCP" and that "they ardently cherish the MCP and warmly support the liberation army."

Recalling the party's initial acknowledgment last November of the split in communist ranks, the New Year's comment indicated that differences over military strategy--related to the MCP's call for the movement of liberation armed forces from rebel bases along the Thai border to the south--had played an important role in the party split. The editorial specifically lauded the "failure" over the past year of "the anticommunist and antipopular scheme of the Razak clique and its agents to prevent our army from moving southward." And the Central Committee message reaffirmed the need to "persist in taking the road of using the villages to surround the cities and seizing political power by armed force" in demanding that "all shock forces" continue their advance southward.

PRAISE OF CHINA, URBAN UNREST Reflecting apparent MCP sensitivity about Peking's establishment of diplomatic relations with Malaysia, this year's comment avoided all reference to China in reviewing the international scene. By contrast, past assessments had highlighted praise for Chinese domestic and foreign policies, lauding Peking's continuing support of the "world revolutionary movement." Also absent this year was the usual support

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for "Marxism-Leninism-Mao Tse-tung Thought," though the editorial did cite Mao once in quoting his dictum that "revolution" remains the "main trend" in the world today.

In keeping with the gradually increasing attention by other PRC-aligned parties in Southeast Asia to urban unrest and political mass movements,* the VOMR editorial devoted considerable praise to recent political and social protests in Malaysian cities as an auxiliary to the armed struggle led by the MCP. It called particular attention to last month's student demonstrations against the Razak government, saying that this marked "the new awakening of the students in our country."

* The Thai CP's attention to this issue is discussed in the TRENDS of 14 August 1974 pages 20-21, and that of the Burmese CP is discussed in the TRENDS of 28 August 1974, pages 14-15.

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DRV-THAI RELATIONS: North Vietnam's initial response to Thai Foreign Minister Charunphan Itsarangkun's 30 December letter on DRV-Thai relations was provided by a DRV Foreign Ministry spokesman, in an interview with a VNA correspondent released by Hanoi on 6 January. The Thai foreign minister's letter was in reply to DRV Foreign Minister Nguyen Duy Trinh's 27 November letter, which had outlined Hanoi's preconditions for improved DRV-Thai relations. The DRV spokesman's remarks--introduced with the proviso that the Thai letter was still "being considered"--focused criticism on Bangkok's failure to deal with the key issue of the continued presence of U.S. troops in Thailand, a problem described as the "only obstacle to the normalization of relations between the Thai and DRV governments." The spokesman thus went further than Hanoi has in the past to pinpoint the question of the U.S. forces as the paramount issue for Hanoi in its relations with Thailand. Other Hanoi propaganda in recent weeks has more vaguely demanded that Bangkok stop "serving the U.S. imperialists' aggressive and interventionist schemes," or has echoed the broader formulation in the 27 November Trinh letter which linked the condition of removal of U.S. forces with demands that Thailand end "collusion" with the United States and "respect the fundamental national rights" of the Indochinese peoples.

DRV, VOPT ON THANOM RETURN: Although Peking has remained silent on former Prime Minister Thanom Kittikhachon's brief 27 December return to Thailand, both Hanoi and the clandestine Voice of the People of Thailand (VOPT) have used the occasion to press their respective interests in opposition to the present Thai government. Hanoi radio linked Thanom's return to the issue of U.S. bases in Thailand, charging in a commentary on 30 December that the United States had "masterminded" the return as part of a scheme to continue using Thailand as "a permanent base for U.S. troops to oppose Southeast Asian countries' sovereignty and security." Hanoi refrained from directly implicating the current Sanya administration in Thanom's return, referring only to unnamed U.S. "henchmen" in Thailand. By contrast, hard-hitting VOPT commentaries on 28 and 29 December claimed that the Sanya government had played a role in Thanom's return, charging that Bangkok's alleged cooperation with Thanom demonstrated that the present government was as reactionary as the previous regime and that official explanations for Thanom's return by the Sanya administration were the efforts of "a bandit protecting a fellow bandit."

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NORTH VIETNAMESE PARTY CONGRESS: Indications that the Vietnam Workers Party (VWP) is to convene a party congress in 1975 were contained in remarks by Cuban Premier Fidel Castro in a 5 December speech marking Cuban builders day broadcast by Havana radio. In detailing aid projects Cuba has undertaken in Vietnam, Castro stated that a hotel Cuba is building for the Vietnamese is being completed "as fast as possible. . . for the party congress this coming year." While Hanoi media are not known to have publicly mentioned plans for a fourth VWP congress, its convocation is long overdue and 1975 would seem to be a propitious year, since it is the last year before the start of the DRV five-year plan and will include several major commemorations--the party's 45th anniversary, the 30th anniversary of the founding of the DRV, and the 85th anniversary of Ho Chi Minh's birth. Hanoi has not held a party congress since September 1960, although the party statutes stipulate they should be convened every four years. If a VWP congress is in fact going to be held this year there should be an announcement in Hanoi media in the near future, perhaps to coincide with the party anniversary on 3 February. The preparations for the 1960 congress began at least as early as 1956 when the 10th VWP Central Committee Plenum ordered the Politburo to begin planning the congress. Apparently the plans met with delays and the final decision on the convocation of the congress in 1960 was made in October 1959 at the 17th plenum.

KIM IL-SONG NEW YEAR ADDRESS: For the first time since the North-South Korean talks began in 1971, Kim Il-song's New year address did not mention the dialog; he failed even to include last year's passing pledge to implement the principles of the July 1972 North-South joint statement. This year's message focused on North Korea's economic achievements in 1974 and on 1975 domestic production goals, singling out the transportation sector for priority attention. For the third year in a row Kim paid little attention to defense matters, but he did renew last year's pledge to support the "struggle" in the South. Unlike last year, Kim's message dropped all mention of the United Nations, although he did allude to the international "warm support" the DPRK had received during the year in countering the "two Koreas plot." Kim's address last year had praised decisions at the United Nations preventing the simultaneous admission of "two Koreas" to the world organization and disbanding UNCURK, the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea. Illustrating the importance Pyongyang continues to attach to improving its international standing, however, Kim promised that the North would continue to develop "economic cooperation and friendly relations" with "Third World" countries.

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CUBAN REVOLUTION ANNIVERSARY: Havana celebrated the 16th anniversary of the Cuban revolution on 1 January in low-key fashion, a Havana radio anniversary commentary on the 3d praising Cuba's "world prestige" and the "strong, solidly entrenched and unquenchable" revolution in self-congratulatory terms. While one of the Cuban leaders generally makes a speech around the time of the anniversary, the occasion was not marked by a speech this year. Castro's only remarks in this period, reported by PRENSA LATINA on the 4th, came in a discussion with Mexican newsmen in which the Cuban premier said, among other things, that he expected the U.S. blockade to be lifted "bit by bit" and observed that President Ford's Cuba stance was only a "slight change" from that of his predecessor but that Ford lacked Richard Nixon's "almost personal hatred" of the Cuban revolution. The Soviet leaders' anniversary greetings described Cuba as a "worthy member" of the socialist community and characterized Brezhnev's January 1974 visit to Cuba as "friendly" and "very fruitful." For the first time in such a message, Moscow described Cuba as having a role in detente, noting that Cuba "takes an active part" in the move toward "relaxation of tension in the world arena."

CUBAN-VENEZUELAN RELATIONS: Venezuela's 29 December resumption of diplomatic relations with Cuba was warmly greeted by Castro in a 1 January telegram to Venezuelan President Carlos Andres Perez congratulating him on his "courageous decision" and noting that "despite incredible difficulties" the Cuban revolution had "survived and progressed." Venezuela is the second Latin American country to establish relations with Cuba since 12 November, when the OAS foreign ministers rejected a resolution to lift sanctions against Havana. The 30 November recognition by the Bahamas, not an OAS member, brought only a brief acknowledgment by Havana's domestic service. Castro in his telegram demonstrated his satisfaction with Venezuela's action by thanking Perez for his efforts to "break the unfair blockade" and promising to bury "differences that have separated us in the past." President Perez has been a consistent target of Cuban attention since his inauguration in March 1974. Castro in his 28 September speech, for example, had praised Venezuela's "vigorous" response to the United States' "big stick" policy vis-a-vis oil producers and vowed that "Venezuela will not be alone in this hemisphere as Cuba once was." On 7 December Cuban Foreign Minister Raul Roa had told newsmen in Lima that Venezuela's nationalization of its iron industry was proof of the government's "revolutionary outlook" and that Cuba would restore ties "as soon as Venezuela wants to." Moscow has welcomed the renewal of Cuban-Venezuelan relations as an "effective blow" against the blockade of Cuba, SOVIET RUSSIA declaring on 7 January that Caracas' decision demonstrated Cuba's "complete acceptability" to the world.

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A P P E N D I X

MOSCOW, PEKING BROADCAST STATISTICS 30 DECEMBER - 5 JANUARY 1975

<u>Moscow (2381 items)</u>			<u>Peking (922 items)</u>		
Party-Government New	(--)	7%	Indochina	(9%)	7%
Year's Message to			[Vietnam	(7%)	5%]
the Soviet People			New Year's Joint	(--)	6%
Egyptian Foreign Minis-	(--)	5%	Editorial		
ter Fahmi in USSR			USSR	(5%)	4%
China	(2%)	5%	Chou Message on	(--)	3%
Brezhnev New Year's	(--)	3%	Pakistan Earthquake		
Greeting to Chilean			Chou Message on	(--)	3%
CP Leader Corvalan			Australia Typhoon		
Portuguese Foreign	(--)	3%			
Minister Soares in					
USSR					

These statistics are based on the voicecast commentary output of the Moscow and Peking domestic and international radio services. The term "commentary" is used to denote the lengthy item—radio talk, speech, press article or editorial, government or party statement, or diplomatic note. Items of extensive reportage are counted as commentaries.

Figures in parentheses indicate volume of comment during the preceding week.

Topics and events given major attention in terms of volume are not always discussed in the body of the Trends. Some may have been covered in prior issues; in other cases the propaganda content may be routine or of minor significance.